

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 156842
ORIGIN INR-07

INFO OCT-01 SSM-03 NEA-10 DODE-00 OC-06 CCO-00 ISO-00
CIAE-00 /027 R

DRAFTED BY INR/RNA/NE:AAVACCARO
APPROVED BY INR/RNA:PHSTODDARD
SSM-CWKONTOS
DIST SSM

-----082506 070920Z /23

R 062141Z JUL 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION SINAI
INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SANA

S E C R E T STATE 156842

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM 352 - JULY 6, 1977

MOSCOW, KUWAIT, SANA FOR AMBASSADORS

LONDON FOR KINSOLVING

1. LEBANON. THERE WAS SHELLING ALONG MUCH OF THE 60-MILE ISRAEL-LEBANON BORDER YESTERDAY. A REUTER CORRESPONDENT COMMENTED THAT ISRAELI TROOPS IN THE NORTH APPEARED TO BE ON ALERT. NEVERTHELESS, PRESS REPORTS OF FIERCE BATTLES WITH HEAVY CASUALTIES SEEM TO HAVE BEEN OVER PLAYED. OUR DEFENSE ATTACHE IN TEL AVIV REPORTS THAT THE IDF BELIEVES THERE IS A "GREAT DEAL MORE SMOKE
SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 156842

THAN FIRE" IN MEDIA REPORTING. ACCORDING TO THE IDF, THE PALESTINIANS ARE CONDUCTING A WAR OF ATTRITION AGAINST CHRISTIANS, AND THE RECENT ESCALATION IN FIGHTING SERVES THE PALESTINIAN PURPOSE BY OBLIGING THE LOCAL RIGHTIST POPULATION TO FLEE.

2. THE FIGHTING IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, WITH CONCOMITANT GROWING PRESSURES ON THE LOCAL VILLAGERS TO SUPPORT ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER, IS PUTTING ADDITIONAL STRAINS

ON THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT. SEVERAL DEPUTIES FROM THE SOUTH ASKED SARKIS TO DISPATCH REGULAR LEBANESE OR ARAB TROOPS TO THE AREA SOUTH OF THE LITANI. ONE DEPUTY TOLD REPORTERS IN BEIRUT THAT HE HAD GIVEN SARKIS A PETITION SIGNED BY 80 MAYORS FROM FRONT-LINE VILLAGES. THE PALESTINIANS, FOR THEIR PART, ARE CONCERNED THAT THE RIGHTISTS AND THE ISRAELIS ARE ATTEMPTING TO FORCE LOCAL LEBANESE EITHER TO SIDE WITH THEM OR TO FLEE THE AREA.

3. NONE OF THE MAJOR PARTICIPANTS SEEMS TO WANT AN ALL-OUT CONFRONTATION AT THIS TIME, BUT THE CURRENT TENSION AND MILITARY ACTIVITY HEIGHTEN THE CHANCES OF A MISCALCULATION BY ONE OR MORE OF THE PARTIES. THE PALESTINIANS, RIGHTISTS, SYRIANS, AND THE ISRAELIS ARE MANEUVERING TO AUGMENT THEIR LOCAL STRENGTH. WITH THE CURRENT HIGH-LEVEL OF TENSION ANY SYRIAN ATTEMPT TO INTRODUCE LARGE-SCALE FORCES SOUTH OF THE LITANI RIVER COULD TRIGGER A MILITARY RESPONSE FROM THE ISRAELIS.

4. THE TENSE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON HAS ALSO INCREASED ARAB FEARS THAT THE NEW ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WILL LAUNCH A MILITARY MOVE AGAINST AN ARAB STATE. WE HAVE HAD REPORTS FROM DAMASCUS, AMMAN, AND CAIRO INDICATING
SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 156842

THAT THESE FEARS ARE WIDELY ENTERTAINED IN ARAB GOVERNMENT CIRCLES. THE EGYPTIANS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT AN ISRAELI PUSH INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON, WHILE THE SYRIANS ARE WORRIED ABOUT LEBANON AND THE GOLAN AS WELL.
(CONFIDENTIAL)

5. EGYPT. PRESIDENT SADAT OUTLINED EGYPT'S FUNDAMENTAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS VIS-A-VIS THE PEACE PROCESS IN A RECENT INTERVIEW IN THE LEBANESE WEEKLY ARAB WEEK. HE CHARACTERIZED THESE AS:

(A) THE NECESSITY FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO THE PRE-1967 BORDERS;

(B) THE CREATION OF A WEST BANK/GAZA PALESTINIAN STATE OFFICIALLY LINKED TO JORDAN;

(C) PROPER PREPARATIONS MUST BE MADE FOR GENEVA, SINCE A FAILURE TO DO SO WOULD LIKELY STALL THE CONFERENCE; AND

(D) OPEN BORDERS AND DIPLOMATIC/COMMERCIAL EXCHANGES WITH ISRAEL ARE MERELY "NEW LANDMINES ON THE ROAD TO PEACE."

6. EMBASSY CAIRO COMMENTED THAT THE LAST POINT DOES NOT REPRESENT A FLAT TURNDOWN OF ISRAEL'S CONCEPT OF PEACE. RATHER, IT REFLECTS THE DIFFICULTY THE ARABS

WOULD HAVE IN AGREEING TO THIS AND THEIR PERCEPTION THAT IT IS AN ISRAELI PLOY TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM THE MAIN ISSUES.

7. EMBASSY CAIRO ALSO RESENTLY OBSERVED THAT THE FEELING THERE IS THAT THE ARABS, LED BY EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA, HAVE MADE STATESMENLIKE COMPROMISES (E.G., THEIR WILLINGNESS TO ALLOW ISRAEL TO LIVE IN PEACE BEHIND THE 1967 BORDERS). THIS IS A BREAK WITH SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 156842

THE PAST, ACCORDING TO THE EGYPTIANS, MADE POSSIBLE BY THE "VICTORY" OF THE OCTOBER WAR. RECENT US AND EUROPEAN STATEMENTS ON THE MIDDLE EAST HAVE GIVEN THE EGYPTIANS CONFIDENCE THAT THE SADAT STRATEGY HAS PAID OFF AND THAT THE PEACE BURDEN IS NOW SQUARELY ON ISRAEL AND THE US, AS ITS MAJOR SUPPORTER. (CONFIDENTIAL)

8. WEST BANK. WEST BANK LEADERS ARE CLEARLY WORRIED OVER THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT'S WEST BANK POLICY. THEY ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED OVER BEGIN'S STATEMENTS THAT THE WEST BANK SHOULD BE CONSIDERED PART OF ISRAEL, HIS ALLUSION TO THE POSSIBILITY OF ANNEXING IT, AND THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE LIKUD GOVERNMENT WILL APPROVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SEVERAL MORE ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS. MOREOVER, SOME WEST BANK LEADERS HAVE NOTED A HARDENING OF THE ATTITUDE OF ISRAELI MILITARY GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL WHICH THEY INTERPRET AS INDICATING A MORE STRICT APPROACH IN DEALING WITH WEST BANKERS.

9. AS A RESPONSE TO THIS PERCEIVED THREAT FROM THE LIKUD GOVERNMENT, WEST BANK MAYORS DRAFTED A SET OF PRINCIPLES OUTLINING THEIR POSITION ON THE PEACE PROCESS. A TENTATIVE ACCORD WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN REACHED AT A MAYOR'S MEETING ON JUNE 29, ACCORDING TO OUR JERUSALEM CONSULATE GENERAL, AND WAS TO HAVE BEEN SIGNED THE END OF LAST WEEK.

THE DOCUMENT IS SAID TO INCLUDE SIX PRINCIPLES:

(A) REJECTION OF ISRAELI OCCUPATION AND ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS;

(B) A DEMAND FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO THE PRE-1967 LINES;
SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 156842

(C) THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT, DEMOCRATIC PALESTINIAN STATE ON THE WEST BANK;

(D) RECOGNITION OF THE PLO AS THE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE

TATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE;

(E) A CALL FOR THE IMMEDIATE RECONVENING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, WITH PLO PARTICIPATION; AND

(F) A JUST PEACE WITH ISRAEL.

10. THERE WAS SOME DISAGREEMENT AMONG THE MAYORS OVER THE PHRASING OF A NUMBER OF POINTS, BUT THE MODERATES SEEM TO HAVE PREVAILED. IF THE MORE RADICAL MAYORS HAD HAD THEIR WAY, THE STATEMENT WOULD LIKELY HAVE ADHERED CLOSELY TO THE MORE HARDLINE DECLARATION ISSUED BY THE PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL (PNC) IN MARCH. IN ITS PRESENT FORMULATION, IT SEEMS TO GO BEYOND THE PLO'S PUBLIC POSITION IN SEVERAL RESPECTS. FOR ONE THING THE 1967 LINES ARE EXPLICITLY STATED AS THE LIMITS OF THEIR TERRITORIAL DEMAND" FURTHERMORE, THE PLO IS NOT RECOGNIZED AS THE "SOLE" PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE, LEAVING OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF DIRECT WEST BANK PARTICIPATION IN NEGOTIATIONS. FINALLY, THE REFERENCE TO A "DEMOCRATIC" STATE, ONE MAYOR STATED, WAS MEANT TO MEAN FREE ELECTIONS OF THE STATE'S LEADERSHIP, THUS EXCLUDING A PLO-IMPOSED GOVERNMENT.

11. THE CONSUL GENERAL IN JERUSALEM BELIEVES THAT, IF ADOPTED IN THIS FORM, THE DOCUMENT WOULD REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE WEST BANK. IT WOULD BE A UNIFIED POLITICAL STAND BY WEST BANK LEADERS ON A PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE ISSUE. FURTHERMORE, IF WEST BANK LEADERS ARE OPENING THE DOOR FOR THEIR OWN PARTICIPATION IN NEGOTIATIONS, THIS WOULD
SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 156842

REPRESENT A RETREAT FROM THEIR PREVIOUS LINE THAT "THE PLO SPEAKS FOR US." HOWEVER, FURTHER HAGGLING OVER THE DOCUMENT COULD WATER DOWN ITS DEVIATION FROM THIS POSITION.

12. IN OUR VIEW, THIS APPARENT WILLINGNESS OF ELECTED WEST BANK LEADERS TO TAKE AN INDEPENDENT STAND REFLECTS THE GROWING POLITICAL AWARENESS AMONG WEST BANKERS AS A WHOLE. SEVERAL FACTORS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT:

(A) A HEIGHTENED SENSE OF COMMUNITY, ARISING FROM PARTIAL ISOLATION FROM JORDAN SINCE 1967, SEEMS TO HAVE GIVEN THE WEST BANKERS A SENSE OF IDENTITY APART FROM OTHER ARABS, EVEN TO A CERTAIN EXTENT FROM THE PALESTINIAN REFUGEES LIVING ABROAD.

(B) A FEELING OF ISOLATION FROM THE REST OF THE ARAB WORLD. THE WEST

BANKERS ARE BITTER OVER THE ALLEGED LACK OF POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT THEY RECEIVE FROM THEIR FELLOW ARABS, DESPITE RECENT PLEDGES OF ARAB AID FOR THE WEST BANK CITIES.

(C) THE BELIEF THAT THE PLO, WHILE IT CURRENTLY SERVES AS A CONVENIENT INTERNATIONAL SPOKESMAN FOR WEST BANKERS, IS NOT TRULY REPRESENTATIVE OF THEM. IN THIS VEIN, WEST BANKERS ARE WARY OF THE RAMIFICATIONS OF THE PLO'S ASSUMING POWER IN ANY WEST BANK/GAZA PALESTINIAN ENTITY.

(D) THE INCREASING NATIONALISM AMONG WEST BANKERS, EVIDENCED BY THE VICTORY OF SEVERAL LEFTWING NATIONALISTS
SECRET

PAGE 07 STATE 156842

IN THE 1976 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

13. THESE FACTORS, IN TURN, SEEM TO HAVE LED WEST BANK LEADERS TO BEGIN TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY THAT AN INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP MIGHT BETTER SERVE THEIR INTERESTS. PROBABLY THE BASIC REASON NOW FOR DOING SO IS THAT SHOULD THE PLO BE UNABLE, OR UNWILLING, TO COMPROMISE OVER THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE AND ACCEPT A TRUNCATED WEST BANK/GAZA STATE, THEN THE WEST BANKERS WOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE THE ISSUE INTO THEIR OWN HANDS.

14. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE IDEA OF A SEPARATE WEST BANK POLITICAL MOVEMENT IS STILL IN THE EARLY STAGES OF DISCUSSION. THERE HAVE AS YET BEEN NO CONCRETE MOVES IN THIS DIRECTION. FURTHERMORE, THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE WEST BANKERS WILL BE ABLE TO BECOME MORE ACTIVE IN THE PEACE PROCESS, AT LEAST IN THE SHORT TERM, IS AN OPEN QUESTION. THE ISRAELI PRESENCE LIMITS THEIR ACTIVITIES, AND THE ISRAELIS WOULD LIKELY NOT PERMIT THE FORMATION OF POLITICAL GROUPS WHICH THEY COULD NOT CONTROL. MOREOVER, THE WEST BANKERS THEMSELVES ARE FEARFUL OF ISRAELI REPRISALS AND ARE RELUCTANT TO TAKE INITIATIVES THAT WOULD RISK IMPRISONMENT OR EXPULSION FROM THE WEST BANK FOR CHALLENGING THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES TOO DIRECTLY. (SECRET)

15. LIBYA. REPORTS FROM LIBYA PERSIST THAT TRIPOLI HAS SURREPTITOUSLY PROCURED AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF WEST GERMAN-DESIGNED LEOPARD TANKS, AND THAT THEY HAVE BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO THE SOVIETS FOR INTELLIGENCE EXPLOITATION. WHILE NONE OF THIS INFORMATION CAN BE CONFIRMED AT THIS TIME, A REPORT FROM THE US DEFENSE ATTACHE IN ROME INDICATED THAT THE TANKS MAY HAVE BEEN AMONG THOSE BEING MANUFACTURED UNDER LICENSE BY THE ITALIANS. ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL REACTION FROM THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT OVER THESE REPORTS, A SCHEDULED

SECRET

PAGE 08 STATE 156842

LATE JUNE MEETING BETWEEN WEST GERMAN AND ITALIAN DEFENSE
OFFICIALS WAS CANCELLED BY THE BONN GOVERNMENT, REPORTED-
LY ANGERED OVER THE LEOPARD INCIDENT. (CONFIDENTIAL)
VANCE

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 22-Sep-1999 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION, POLITICAL SUMMARIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE156842
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: INR/RNA/NE:AAVACCARO
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 XGDS-2
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D770240-1319
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197707105/baaaeteu.tel
Line Count: 282
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 81038762-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN INR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1725288
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTSUM 352 - JULY 6, 1977
TAGS: PINR, EG, IS, XF
To: SINAI INFO KUWAIT MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/81038762-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009